

# Board of Contract Appeals

General Services Administration  
Washington, D.C. 20405

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March 28, 2002

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GSBCA 15759-TRAV

In the Matter of SHARI LENARD

Shari Lenard, AMF O'Hare, IL, Claimant

Douglas D. Petersen, Acting Director, Hines Information Technology Center, Hines, IL, appearing for Department of Veterans Affairs.

**GOODMAN**, Board Judge.

Claimant, Shari Lenard, is an employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs. The agency has denied her claim for reimbursement of travel expenses incurred while attending a training course. She has requested that this Board review the agency's denial.

## Background

From November 6 through November 9, 2001, claimant attended a class for technical writing. She states that when she initially enrolled in the class, she did not have personal transportation, but was "searching for a vehicle." When the time came to attend the class, she still did not have a vehicle, and requested permission from the agency's travel officer to rent a car. The class was approximately two hours from her home by bus but a half hour by car. Her request for a rental vehicle was denied, and she was told that she should attend the class unless she could find another employee to take her place. She could not find a substitute, and her supervisor directed her to attend the class. Claimant was able to borrow a car for the first two days of the course, but traveled by taxi to and from the course for the last two days.

The agency denied her request for reimbursement of the taxi fare, stating that she had sought to attend the course on her own initiative, not as a requirement by management. However, the agency agreed to pay for the training in the amount of \$2202, and claimant enrolled in July 2001. Claimant knew that the training was approximately twenty miles from her home, and she did not own a car. She did not request the rental vehicle until two days before the training was to begin in November, and the request was denied. It is the policy of the agency not to approve rental vehicles or taxis for local travel.

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## Discussion

According to the Federal Travel Regulation 301-10.420, taxi fees may be reimbursed when incurred by an employee for local travel " when [the] agency authorizes/approves the use of a taxi." 41 CFR 301-10.420 (Jul. 1, 2001). In the instant case, the agency has its own internal guidance for determining reimbursement for local travel, which reads in relevant part:

(4) Local transportation facilities (other than taxi-cabs) will be used when it is practicable and will permit accomplishment of the official business within the limitations imposed by the nature of such business.

(5) Taxicabs . . . may be used when:

(a) Necessary due to the nature of the business.

(b) Determined to be advantageous to the Government by an official designated to authorize local travel.

M-P 1, Pt. II, Ch. 2 at 2-27 (Feb. 28, 1995).

The agency has informed the Board that its policy is not to authorize taxis for local travel, and it does not reimburse employees for use of taxis for local travel. The claimant was not authorized to use taxis for local travel, and the agency refused claimant's request for reimbursement. Accordingly, the agency properly denied claimant's request for reimbursement of taxi fees.

Decision

The claim is denied.

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ALLAN H. GOODMAN  
Board Judge